

**Review of the Volume
"Bărbatul și femeia.
Imaginea unei
polemici cu privire la
echitatea de gen"
[The Man and the
Woman. The Image of
a Controversy
Regarding Gender
Equity], Authors:
Iulian Apostu, Cristina
Georgiana Petrescu,
Lumen Publishing
House, 2017**

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Abstract: Definitely the title of the volume "Bărbatul și femeia. imaginea unei polemici cu privire la echitatea de gen" [The Man and the Woman. The Image of a Controversy Regarding Gender Equity], which is authored by Iulian Apostu and Cristina Georgiana Petrescu, published by Lumen Publishing House in Iași, Romania, in 2017, would make us think of a whole series of statements full of flavor and candor about social reality and about the eternal contradiction between man and woman, but no, the book is not about conflict, vanity, quarrels. It is about the essence of men's coexistence with women, about egalitarianism explained with charm and attention to detail. In the 157 pages you can't help but find yourself, it's impossible not to empathize with the authors and you end up with some passages that you might use in order to enter into a dialogue with your own person and you don't know why. And the answer, of course, also comes from the pages of the book, which through the structure of the chapters takes the topics one by one, fixes them, capitalizes on them and places them in contexts that you identify with without doubt and are topical in today's society.

Keywords: *couple, conjugality, gender, equity, Iulian Apostu, Cristina Georgiana Petrescu.*

How to cite: Atomei (Caba), C.I. (2020). Review of the Volume "Bărbatul și femeia. Imaginea unei polemici cu privire la echitatea de gen" [The Man and the Woman. The Image of a Controversy Regarding Gender Equity], Authors: Iulian Apostu, Cristina Georgiana Petrescu, Lumen Publishing House, 2017. *Logos Universality Mentality Education Novelty: Economics and Administrative Sciences*, 5(1), 45-48. <https://doi.org/10.18662/lumeneas/5.1/21>

The anatomical, physiological, moral, intellectual and social differences between sexes are relevant. Of course, once ingrained into the public mentality, ideas become difficult to change, and perhaps the authors do not even intend to do so. I would still dare to bring to light the prayer of the Pharisee: "Lord, I thank you that you did not make me a slave, a dog or a woman". It has been written about women and men and will be written again, because people are wonderful creations, and men and women, in their uniqueness, give the essence of the world.

As a woman, I obviously feel marked by feminism and the struggle of women over many centuries, to the position they have today. From the woman in Christ's time, the life-giving woman, with limits, with a clear destiny and an inferior position as opposed to the man, to today's woman, who is a corporatist, a leader, the head of the family, there is a difference like a precipice. Did running after the prosaic ban make this split possible ... or the injustices that women suffered in time were marked by the helplessness of their destiny, for the simple fact that women were born in a world that was not yet ready for their emancipation? Do the anatomical, physiological, intellectual characteristics of the man make him superior to the woman? Does this superiority ensure man's social and legal superiority? Does the fact that, by comparison with the "weak sex", the man is the unbeatable sex, and this arbitrarily and slightly despotic requires women to humiliate towards inequality and subordination?

The authors gave the reader the chance to choose which side one stands for, they presented the two characters, the man and the woman, in comparisons, passing them through the same filter and giving them equal positions through text and shades. I like that they let the reader be the arbiter and did not become "omniscient", did not place any blame or induce any conviction as if it possessed the rank of a credo. However, socialization and culture have an impact on the way certain traits of women are presented as compared to men. This means that, although men and women would have different levels of the same qualities, parental education, cultural heritage and the process of socialization can affect both their possibilities of expression and the manifestation of other traits.

Political proclamations, the struggle for supremacy, elections, the couple and the family are just some of the topics presented in the book and which make a clear x-ray of the present. Honestly, I don't even know if I can still be nostalgic for Jane Eyre's type of wife or to keep holding on to the world of today's free, provocative women, ready at any moment to devour everything that might stand in their path.

Both women and men look for each other in similarities, completions, attractions and compatibility, and this is, in fact, the essence of the first chapter. Contemporary love seems to provoke the two authors to a fair and extensive analysis and explanations, in fact the whole book abounds in references to well known authors, in a study which is intended to be a research of the phenomenon involving so many sources not for truthfulness, as I say, but to create different angles and to provide the opportunity for representing all relevant opinions on the subject, because no matter how hard we try to harmonize them, men and women will always be part of two teams, not in war, but in contradiction.

Passages in which the authors bring to attention the image of the inferior woman as opposed to the man who she was supposed to admire like a statue of Michelangelo reveal the tumultuous ascension of the woman, her perfect charm and the cult for family and home. I especially liked the way the authors chose to "grow" the woman, chapter by chapter, going through historical periods, ideological currents and social movements that marked her existence and defined her as an exponent of society. The twentieth century is, perhaps, the most dense and accelerated period as the unfolding of historical facts, contradictory and complex, happy but also dramatic through the consequences of historical processes and phenomena unfolding spiritually, politically, military or socially.

The beginnings, but also the end of this century, deeply marked the consciousness of contemporaneity. There were many who, around the year 1900, spoke of the end of a period called the Belle Epoque and lived the anguish of a time that seemed hostile to them, these being just a few elements that lead not only to the need to know the history of the twentieth century, but especially to the understanding of the causes that determined the evolution of one or another social intricacy from this century, to the deciphering of the social, political, ideological, spiritual mechanisms that would allow people not to repeat the same errors "along the way" in the evolution of society. Women's work, which used to characterize only the agricultural and industrialized world, now also characterizes the bourgeoisie. Offices, liberal professions are open to women, who will receive positions of responsibility. The condition of women is changing, feminism is making progress. Women get the right to vote, and emancipation of women becomes one of the slogans of the immediately postwar period.

More and more is being written about the supportive role of men, as family providers, everything arouses towards an idea with unclear criteria, which somewhat harshly establishes the rules of materialism within the family, of home security and the fascinating transformation of the man into

the Alpha male. Gender inequality means inequality between men and women in accessing existing resources. Therefore, gender inequality refers to the differences between men and women in terms of social and economic benefits. The role of men and women is somewhat predestined, suggested by the scene they came to play as social actors, which are roles that people perceive as such due to the legacy of archetypes. Despite the controversy over male dominance as compared to women in households and at the workplace, there seems to be an argument in both directions.

Women have achieved success, conquered victory after victory, leaving deep traces in the world of men. We can speak of a "masculinization" of women, of a sharpening of their senses. Today's woman has nothing left of Venus, she's more of an Amazon. Independent, ruthless, sometimes the woman ended up fighting on an equal footing with men and even surpassing them. The two authors, a man and a woman, certainly not by chance, made a unique, topical, documented and very well supported radiography. From the biblical story of human creation, through the Antiquity of the ancient Greeks, for whom the woman was considered a "mutilated" man, to the influential Freudian theory of sexuality, human behavior was reduced to male experiences and privileges.

One of the prejudices about feminism is that feminism is just extreme victimism and that feminists hold men guilty of the countless rights denied to women in the past. Prejudice itself makes one forget that it can be said that feminism has changed society, starting with the right to vote to equal pay for equal work. Most feminists say that much more can be done for women, but feminist principles are no longer seen as specific issues. They have become values adopted by most people. In certain circumstances, however, women had to respond to exhausting challenges and trials, the so-called "super-woman", who must strike a balance between career and family.

I thus conclude this review of a book that fascinated me with its maturity and original approach and captivated me with scientificity, inviting you to open your mind to assimilate it.

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